

February 2, 2008

TO: FCC

RE: Petition for Hawk Relay and Deaf-Blind Relay Service

My name is Maricar Marquez. I am deaf and partially sighted. I am writing to comment in regards to the Hawk Relay Service and the provision of Deaf-Blind Relay Service (DBRS). I am employed as a Senior Independent Living Instructor at the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) in Sands Point, NY. I serve on the Board of Directors for the American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB).

Because of my vision loss caused by Retinitis Pigmentosa, I am unable to use a videophone that many deaf people use to communicate with other people directly or via a Video Relay Service (VRS). I can not see a signer's hands on a monitor. My primary communication method is tactile American Sign Language (ASL) in which means I place my hand over a signer's hand to feel what the signer is saying.

I feel that FCC should allow deaf-blind people like myself, to access to the use of a videophone or any types of telecommunication devices, to communicate freely with people. I provide individualized rehabilitation training to deaf-blind teenagers and adults to enhance their independent living skills to live independently as possible in their homes. With FCC's support, they can function fully in their lives to work, socialize, and do whatever they like. Deaf-Blind people are in a need of DBRS. FCC will make a difference for deaf-blind people anywhere.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,



Maricar Marquez